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Atari Online News, Etc.  
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Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor  
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor  
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"  
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"  
Albert Dayes -- CC: Classic Chips

With Contributions by:

Benjamin Smith  
OXO Systems  
Fred Horvat  
Michael Thomasson

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A-ONE #0140

12/03/99

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->From the Editor's Keyboard

"Saying it like it is!"

Okay, I'm ready for Spring! The cold(er) weather is here. We narrowly missed a major snowstorm the other night; and I'm not disappointed! Maybe in a few weeks I'll be prepared for it, but I'm still clinging to the remnants of warmer temperatures. Oh well, short of moving to the warmer parts of the country, we're stuck with it.

We finally have some interesting Atari-related news again! I found a message in Delphi's Atari Advantage forum that related information pertaining to the Milan II new Atari clone. Interesting reading. Also, WenSuite is being worked on continuously by OXO. A brief announcement pertaining to the latest version and where to get it are in this issue.

Microsoft's antitrust case is still in the news. There was a mediation meeting this past week, but no details have emerged because of apparent gag orders by the judge. It appears that a variety of options are being discussed to try and settle this case. It's anybody's guess at the moment as to how this will all be settled.

It seems like this is the season for viruses. Now PC users have to be wary of the 'Minizip' virus that's arrived on the scene. It seems like there's at least one new "major" virus a week in the news these days. I could never understand why people would feel the need or desire to wreak this kind of damage on so many innocent computer users. It's really a shame.

Until next time...

#### Milan II Announced

Milan II at the Messe (November 22 / 99)

Below is a slightly edited copy of a post in news:fr.comp.sys.atari by Frank Dopierala

'On Saturday, the 20th of November, there was an ATARI-Fair in Hannover (Germany). The environment was very poor (a cold warehouse atmosphere) but I returned extremely positive, because the Milan II was presented by AXRO, a huge distributor for media concerning to Ink-Printer, Laser-Printer Copiers etc. Hewlett Packard(!) was even present. The news is that (I talked about an hour with the representative of AXRO), that the Milan II Standard equipment (!) is the following:

Hardware

ATX-Tower  
MC68060 with at least 66Mhz, 80Mhz is under construction

64MB-SDRAM (with full Bus-speed access at 66/80Mhz!!!!)  
HDD: at least 10 GB (maybe 15 GB)  
SoundBlaster SB64 PCI  
ATI Mach 64 with 4MB Videoram, expandable up to 16MB  
2x IDE, 3x serial, 1x parallel, 2x USB (hot plugging!),  
Keyboard, PS2-Mouse 3x ISA-Slot, 4x PCI-Slot (2 PCI  
used for graphic- and sound card)  
TEAC Floppy 1,44 MB, 40x CD-ROM (Cyberdrive)

## Software

The Milan II is shipped with only ONE Operating System(!): Magic with Jinnee!!

NVDI

Iconnect with Draconis Internet-Package

(Browser, eMailer, Chatter,....)

Pixart, Smurf SilverEdition, Photoline

TempusWord 4 or papyrus home (is not decided yet)

Texel home

A coupon to get Calamus SL for 199,- DM (app. 100,- Euro) instead of 999,- DM (500,- Euro)

COMA (Communication Manager for Fax and Voicemail)

Games: RunningMilan, Impulse (New Milan-Special games), some more games are presently programmed by third-party.

## Developing-Systems

GNU C/C++, ACS-Pro (new Version for GNU C/C++), Object Gem, Bubble Gem, OLGA, UDO, UDO-Shell, ST-Guide, Omikron-Basic 6 (NEW VERSION!!), Face Value

## Now the sensation

The system with configuration listed above shall be sold for 1699,- DM!!!! (App. 850,- Euro)

I asked them what HP is doing there and they gave me the answer that HP is supporting AXRO with ALL products HP is actually producing (Printer, Scanner, Streamer etc.) for developing driver for the whole product-palette of HP to run with an Milan II.

## Another very positive news

The Milan II is COMPLETELY assembled at MOTOROLA!! (That's why the System can be sold at this low price!).

The Milan II is presented to the wide market on next CeBit in Hannover and AXRO told me that there will be a very aggressive marketing on it, because AXRO noticed that the number of users working with Windows-Systems, that are extremely angry about Microsoft about their huge, slow and resource eating Programs is permanently growing and growing. And they have the opinion that if the huge mass of users (except ATARI-Users) would know that there is a system that can be a good alternative of their work, they would buy it, and I agree in that!'

Fun Media in English (November 19 / 99)

The modern multimedia creator Fun Media has been majorly updated to a new version. Furthermore, Fun Media is now in English (complete with

documentation!). One nice new feature of the latest version is the ability for movies to be saved in the popular AVI format (with sound) using RLE compression. If you have not already tried the demo version because of the language barrier, now is the time!

#### WenSuite v3.30b Available and In English

The new english version of WenSuite is available.  
This is the v3.30b. It corrects all the bugs  
introduced by the v3.30a and many others.

The history file is now available in english.

Go to <http://oxo.systems.online.fr>

and click on the DOWNLOAD link

Enjoy!  
the OXO Systems team

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->A-ONE User Group Notes! - Meetings, Shows, and Info!

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NEW Meeting Night! Atari Club Meeting in Portland, Oregon. USA!

If you have an Atari and live in Portland, Oregon. U.S.A. or vicinity, you are cordially invited to attend a Meeting of the Portland Atari Club. You don't have to be a member to attend. Now we've moved our meeting to a new night. Same Bat Time! Same Bat Channel! We meet the 2nd Thursday of each Month. Our Next meeting will be Thursday, December 9th, 7 pm at the Pizza Baron at 2604 S.E 122nd Avenue in Portland, Oregon. Get together with other Atarians. Make friends, meet new people, maybe find an old friend. Eat Pizza, drink Pop or Beer in a decorative atmosphere. Bring your family to a family friendly place.

For more info try:

<http://pac.pdxweb.net>

e-mail: [atari@benjamin.net](mailto:atari@benjamin.net)

For more information or directions, please call our Vice President Ben Smith at (503)256-9974 See you there!

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, I'm more than a bit more comfortable now than I was last week at this time. As a matter of fact, after last thursday's feast-o-rama, I put my feeble talents in the kitchen to work and cooked our own turkey. That's right, after having gorged myself on turkey last Thursday, I turned right around and cooked another one on Saturday. It was quite good, and now I've got enough left over for... well, leftovers.

I've always been the type that could never get enough of a good thing. Turkey is a very good thing. Hmmmm... just four more weeks until Christmas dinner. Would you like to guess what we're having?

On the computer front, things are going well for me. SETI@home's TEAM ATARI is holding up its end of the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (with almost seven years of CPU time under its belt), Linux is running like a top on my PC laptop, I'm researching Linux or NetBSD (another Unix-like OS) for my TT, and most of my Y2K fears are gone about my digital charges at work.

That reminds me: Have you noticed how Microsoft "solved" their Y2K problems in Windows98 SE? Take a look at the one of the control panel options (I forget which one it is). It deals with dealing with the date. It gives you an option to treat dates in a particular manner that allows the OS to accept the correct date up to the year 2036. Does that date sound familiar? Take a look at some of the Atari related FAQs around the internet. That's exactly how our "lowly" STs deal with the date... and have since the mid 1980's. Amazing, ain't it?

On another front, this is about the time of year when I launch into my "don't support piracy" speech.

One would think that, with the state of the Atari market, there wouldn't be much of a piracy market. Well, that's just not the case. And even though you tend to think of pirates as shadowy figures lurking around bulletin boards and parking lots after users group meetings, the truth is that today pirates are bolder than ever. They've gone from the shadows to the light, now openly advertising on the internet. Folks, it's just wrong. It was wrong when it was some kid who had cracked his favorite game's encryption. It's wrong now that entire collections of commercial software on CD-ROM. Even though Atari is no longer making computers, even though Atari is now no more than a logo owned by another company, it's wrong.

It's not so much that others will be hurt. It's not even that there is revenue at stake. It's just wrong. Can you remember when that was enough of a reason? Think back. Right and wrong were clear. It was enough of a reason to do or not do something. Think about it. I'm sure you'll do the right thing.

Okay, the sermon is over. Let's take a look at what's being said on the UseNet...

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

=====

When Kevin Dermott mentions that CAB 2.5 doesn't seem to work with GEmulator, Terry May asks:

"Just out of curiosity, why would you want it to? Isn't Gemulator an emulator for PCs? What does CAB offer that NS and IE do not?"

Kevin tells Terry:

"Just for the same reason I would have liked to have been able to do it from Magic PC ,despite lots of help and suggestions I never got this combo to work. I did however get it to work with Tosbox in 16 colour,apart from Cab 2.5 being ignorant of cookies and not scattering logs and records all over the drive of where and what I've been browsing,I get a kind of kick watching it "go" like it never did on any real Atari and in a dark room I can sit there and dream that I'm using a Falcon 060 or some other Machine Atari never made. It's one of those Atari things that's in my blood ,emulation the best form of flattery will keep an interest in Atari software long after the hardware has died."

Kenneth Medin tells Kevin:

"It does work here. You have to run the emulator in "Atari disk mode" and off course have a fully functional tcp/ip stack running. I'm using STInG that works great with Gemulator. Note that there are "fast baud rates" available. You should not use hsmodem as the low level parts are emulated and the old Atari serial speed cpx works OK."

Dennis Bishop asks for help with browsing the web:

"I type into cab 2.7:

<http://www.oxo.system.online.fr>

No matter how I tried, all I get is 'File Not Found' "

Nicholas Bales tells Dennis:

"Because the correct URL is:

<http://oxo.systems.online.fr>

I'm posting this using the latest WS 3.30a, and it is a lot more stable than previous versions. Very fast, nice features, but still a few things to finish (bookmarks, FTP...)."

Stephane Perez asks about sharing an internet connection with a PC:

"I would like to share my internet access (using an external modem) between my PC and my Falcon, with their parallel ports.

On Falcon I've got the very last STING version. On PC, I have windoz 95B. I've got the adequate parallel cable (intensively tested with Parallel Copy).

The problem is the STING configuration. I've seen the site of Olivier Booklage (<http://obooklage.free.fr>) but don't understand some things.

Here is my ROUTE.TAB file :

```
# cnx parallel port
192.0.1.0 255.255.255.0 Centr. PLIP 0.0.0.0
# masquerading
0.0.0.0 0.0.0.0 Masquerade 0.0.0.0
# cnx modem 2
0.0.0.0 0.0.0.0 Modem 2 0.0.0.0
```

Is there an error some where ?

Moreover, in the CPX for configuring the ports, I've set the "masquerading" like this :

- virtual machine : 192.0.1.10
- masking IP (modem 2) : 192.0.1.11

I must admit I don't know a lot of things about TCP/IP... :)

If you can have more info, please tell it."

Kenneth Medin tells Stephane:

"Are there any Windows drivers for plip? I got the impression you would need Linux on the pc side?

First try to get a tcp/ip link between pc-Falcon without any masquerading. When this works it's easy to setup the masquerade part.

When I tried to link Linux/Mint to STinG with ppp there were lots of problems. This was last June so things may have gone for the better. If possible try with SLIP first.

I do have a very reliable ppp link between my Win-95 pc and the TT here via serial cable. I have to start "Remote access" on the pc side first and then activate the port in STinG. The opposite does not work.

First you need ip-addresses for your ports. I would use:

Falcon: 192.168.1.1 . Set this in "STinG port setup" cpx for the plip port. Don't forget to set protocol (ppp/slipp) and mtu at the same time. This port has to be manually activated.

Pc: 192.168.1.2 to be set on the pc itself.

If you activate "Add default route through port" in the STinG dialer configuration pages you don't need any default route in ROUTE.TAB . My ROUTE.TAB would look like this (with real TAB:s instead of spaces):

```
192.168.1.0 255.255.255.0 Centr. PLIP 0.0.0.0
```

That's all to get the local connection. When this works try to add masquerading:

It's best to simply keep the preset addresses as these will work just fine. Note, you should not activate the masquerade pseudo port. It will be activated by the Dialer when you get online. Modem 2 should not be activated either. Also you must select "Use masquerading" in the Dialer setup pages.

You must set the nameserver numerical address on the pc by hand.

Please note that the only file you must edit by hand is ROUTE.TAB . In DEFAULT.CFG you may also want to raise ALLOCMEM to 150000 or so. Everything else is entered in the program dialoges."

Gordon Eastman asks about Atari's attempt to enter the computer "mainstream":

"I usually have no interest in PC's, but I picked one up because it was made by Atari. The main unit looks like a Mega ST. A web search turned up this reference:

<http://www.computingmuseum.com/museum/ataripc.htm>

Mine came with monitor, external floppy and mouse but no keyboard or software. It seems to boot fine to the point where it needs a disk.

Does someone know the Atari model number of the original keyboard? There's a round, female 5 pin DIN keyboard connector on the back of the computer. Will other PC keyboards work?

Was there a special Atari version of DOS or should any MS-DOS boot disk work?"

Gordon McCallum tells Gordon Eastman:

"I bought one of these machines about 5 years ago for the same reason - curiosity mainly because it was made by Atari. The keyboard which came with it looked like a normal PC one but when I tried the Atari keyboard on a PC it did not work. The Atari which I acquired had a mono screen and an internal 5.25 floppy. It booted up using a normal PC Dos floppy and it was able to run a few very simple ( by today's standards!) games. Hope this helps. Incidentally I don't have the Atari now."

Bill Platt posts:

"Another post in this NG prompted me to d-load Gemulator. Has anyone used TOS 4.04 with this. The idea is great, but the 16 color limitation literally makes the program useless for me. Although the idea of a super fast ST is pretty cool, it would be nice to take advantage of the PC's 32bit display. I ran Quick index on it and on a 366mmx, 800x600x16 color mode was roughly 2.5x the speed of a TT."

Kevin Dermott tells Bill:

"I don't think it's just a matter of the Falcon Tos it's a big hardware difference.

They are working towards this and do full Mac stuff so I suppose it's just a matter of time."

Bob King posts this about Wensuite:

"[I] Downloaded it last night. Works a dream on my MegaST4, Falcon and Milan at least in Local browse mode. Very much faster than CAB, much more integrated (FTP, NEWS etc all in one package) and help files (and these are small extracts from what looks like a very good manual) are superb and put ASH to shame. Will probably register. Thanks to Nicholas Bales for the translation, very, very good.

One small point, seems to interpret some HTML commands not so well as CAB, eg tables don't look so 3D. but this should be a matter of tuning, and if OXO don't get some response from this side of the channel, why

the hell should they bother with us. Previous posters have been very down on OXO. Well, they have come through, so as I have said before, give them a chance."

Louis Holleman tells Bob:

"Just don't wanna be rude, but first wait till you get it working decent ON line.... I've been testing 3.12 and 3.20 with a key here and I found it unstable, not displaying stuff right and using the mail/usenet stuff was a pain in the neck. I sure hope that's ALL gone in 3.30.

By the way: I tested under TOS and MagiC on my TT. The stack was the best part."

Bob tells Louis:

"Don't worry, you're not being rude. Of course it could be crap once it's connected online, but OXO do seem to be reacting to the very small Atari etc market in a positive manner, and I'm prepared to give them their due for that. I've 'mailed them the graying out of printing, but will prob. get a key. I am not surprised that it misinterprets some HTML code, see my remarks re the Tables, but that IMHO is a matter of developing/tweaking the code. In my ignorance, it seems that it is more important that the core of the programme enables an overall higher speed of screen draw than CAB. But I could be completely wrong :)) have to see."

Louis tells Bob:

"I tested the previous versions and made a report in a Dutch Atari mag. I had the complete "working" version, with a key that is.

The quick recap:

- Moving GIF's were either not displayed or didn't move
- some JPEG's apparently had problems too
- FTP stuff isn't working at all (no implementation, tho' they show up in the menu's.)
- Getting an "allgroupslist" was a mess.-  
Using the mailer and newsreader for answers got a config file messed up so the messages weren't shown any longer
- formatting of some text in a html document didn't work right sometimes, neither were tables shown OK. You mentioned that one too.
- Colors/pictures showed up like CRAP (capitals indeed) in 256 color mode. In TC it was a lot better.
- the editor for mailer/newsreader had absolutely no functions other than plain text writing.
- tho' the stack in itself worked OK, it messed up my modem commands every time I hit "connect" the first time. After that I had to change them manually and after the next start/connect they turned back into shit again.
- changing fonts was only possible by editing the config file; clicking the menu items led to crashes time and again

I know of several people wrestling with it on their Milans and they cannot even get it connecting. That's at least what I got working over here when I skip the messed up modem commands.

Somehow the only people getting it to work (decently?) are Mac users

running MagicMac....

Again, maybe all these probs have been fixed in the latest version, but to be honest, I won't believe that until I see it with my own eyes.

You know, some people keep telling us to give them (Oxo) a chance. Well, I'd like to but not for such crap which will only SHOW it's crap after you paid FF 290... And I believe this is going on for a couple of years now.

Well, since I'm hearing similar stories from Draconis, I tend to agree with people suggesting to start all over from scratch. It might lead to better results in shorter time and perhaps for less money too...

Just my 5 cents"

Jo Vandeweghe jumps in and posts:

"Let's do remember what I said a few months ago; the problem begins when you buy this program, after that, do expect to NEVER be satisfied.  
3 years ago, for the Wensuite team (only two guys in fact ...) Wensuite was ALREADY ready for use with ftp, mail, news an so on and at this time the authors said without any shame that it was the best program ever made for the atari internet connection, the publicity (in french ST MAG ...) was: Internet on Atari ? So easy with Wensuite it does it all (ftp, mail, news ...)

They simply were lying to illegally get money from the customers.

Let's have a serious look on what this program is able to do today .... it remembers me another story .... Oasis.

All you can read about this master piece program on the french news group is problems and complaining about problems.

This has not changed since 3 years ago.

I suppose you are joking here ? Who the hell would like to run this program on Mac when you have so much good and well designed alternatives ?  
Just try to use it on the real atari ... let's give a try and you'll see what I'm talking about ...

And the icing on the cake: let's give a look at their other programs: XXL spreadsheet and above all EXPRESSO their wysiwyg html editor perhaps at last will you understand why Wensuite is "so much advanced".

When I was using intensively my TT the oxo demo programs were the winners to make my computer crash so much ( and I have downloaded so much hoping they had resolved so much simple problems like displaying correctly pictures) ... no other program leaded my TT to crash so often.

Oxo = promises never held.

If only their programs were shareware .... but they are "so proud" of it.

I must admit one thing: when there is no reasonable alternative a lot of people rely to what seems to continue to develop even if it is a joke program.

Nobody can say today what will happen with Wensuite, but 3 years ago

everyone knew everything about the not very serious Wensuite authors and two months ago I said the same as today.

Let's hope for WS users it will change one day ...."

Well folks, that's it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - 'Tomb Raider 4'! 'Sega Rally 2'!  
\*\*\*\*\*  
'Vandal-Hearts II'! 'NBA Jam 2000'!  
'Warpath Jurassic Park'!  
'Jedi Power Battles'!  
playstation.com Redesigned!  
And much more!

->From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

I don't have a lot to say this week. But, I have to say that this is the first holiday season with our "new" PCs in the house. My wife likes to play games on her system when she's not roaming the internet seeking our families' genealogy roots. I've been dropping in a few stores looking around for some interesting games for her for Christmas. The selection, and I've not been to the large outlets yet, is unbelievable. Yes, I would hope the numbers of games to be huge. But, with so many different PC systems and configurations available, it's a mammoth task to find the right games which can actually be used on any one particular system. The varying system requirements are quite unsettling. At least with my Atari systems, usually the limitations were based on available memory and whether or not a color monitor was required! No wonder PC users are constantly upgrading their systems! Well, the search continues!

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Gaming Superstar Lara Croft is Back for the

## Holidays in Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

Lara Croft, the world's most recognizable electronic game action heroine, comes full circle this holiday season in Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, the fourth installment in Eidos Interactive's best-selling Tomb Raider game franchise. Set in Egypt, this perilous adventure takes Lara back to her Tomb Raiding roots.

Designed for both the PlayStation game console and PC format, Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation sends explorer Lara to the Land of the Pharaohs for an adventure that could cost her more than she bargains for. The plot revolves around ancient mythology and the alignment of the stars at the millennium. Among the new features is an introduction to the story behind how Lara began her tomb raiding career at the age of 16.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is a quantum step forward from previous entries in the popular series. Advanced engine technology drives game play action with much improved enemy artificial intelligence (AI) and cinematics that drive the story of Lara's latest quest. Players will also benefit from a redesigned inventory system with an easier-to-use interface that allows Lara to combine items and use different weapons.

Among these weapons are concussion grenades and revolver with a laser gun sight. A new sniper mode allows Lara to zoom in and out of her targets. She'll also a wield a crossbow that fires three types of ammunition -- regular, poison and explosive arrows. Clear objectives and concentrated locations will result in a more tightly-focused and puzzle-orientated level of activity than in previous games.

"We feel with this new chapter in the Lara Croft saga we've captured the essence of action-adventure gaming that enchanted gamers with the original," said Adrian Smith, of Core Design, Eidos' wholly-owned development house.

## Gamers Embark on a Journey of Mysticism and War

### Konami Introduces Vandal-Hearts II

Konami of America, Inc. announced the release of Vandal-Hearts II for PlayStation -- the sequel to the highly acclaimed role-playing game (RPG) adventure, Vandal-Hearts. Gamers are transported back in time when a world of mysticism, magic and religion enticed powerful gods and corrupt warlords to unlock the secret of Vandal-Hearts.

"Konami has developed a strong tradition of innovative and exciting RPG adventures, and we are proud to deliver one of our most provocative titles to date, Vandal-Hearts II," said Chris Mike, Konami's director of marketing. "Gamers will immerse themselves into Vandal-Hearts II's world of power and magic and be captivated by the political and religious themes of the game."

Centuries ago, the sacred sword known as Vandal-Hearts was created by God and bestowed upon a divine man named Nirvath -- to cleanse away the evil and sin of Man and to lead the righteous to unspoiled land. Nirvath successfully led his people across regional clans, thereby conquering the evil warlords and slowly building a strong and peaceful Nirvath Church

State. The State experienced many years of harmony and tranquility, until corrupt holy men and guerrilla forces threatened national peace.

The "War of Separation" divided the State into four great powers -- Kingdom of Natra, The Church State of Nirvadia, Republic of Vernantze and Zora-Archeo Twin Empire. Vandal-Hearts II begins when these four Great Powers start to confront each other for ultimate supremacy and rule. The youths of the land, led by a farmer's son Joshua, engage in a struggle to bring peace and unity back to their country.

In Vandal-Hearts II there are six classes of powers -- Fire, Ice, Thunder, Wind, Holy and Darkness. The natural relationships between the opposing powers create a foundation of rules in the game that effect character relationships, weapons, skills and body armor.

Gamers may choose from more than 120 different weapons and armor -- each with hidden techniques and strengths to discover. Each weapon contains skills and magic unique only to that weapon and as each character gains more experience, the power of each weapon grows stronger and continues to build strength throughout the game. Weapon types include: sword, shield, special, bow, dagger, lance, throw, wand and axe.

Vandal-Hearts II utilizes a special resource management system, where each player's choice in weapons and armor determines the character's power, vulnerability and level class. The game's unique "Dual Turn System" allows free simultaneous movement of controlled characters and enemies during combat, enhancing the real-time strategy experience. Featuring more than fifty detailed maps, adjustable vantage-point camera angles and special positioning, gamers can employ strategy and tactics to conquer their enemies. Players will become entrenched in the title's new geography -- twice the size of the original Vandal-Hearts world -- and the game's multiple endings will make gamers want to discover every outcome.

Supporting the launch of Vandal-Hearts II will be a comprehensive marketing campaign. The product will be seen in print enthusiast magazines nationwide coupled with a strong national retail push, including various POP materials.

Vandal-Hearts II is now available in retail outlets nationwide. Available with an "M-Mature" ESRB rating, the title will be priced at \$39.99 SRP.

Electronic Arts Ships Warpath Jurassic Park for  
the PlayStation From DreamWorks Interactive

First Fighting Game to Feature Head-to-Head  
Dinosaurs in the World of Jurassic Park

Electronic Arts announced that it has shipped Warpath Jurassic Park for the PlayStation from DreamWorks Interactive. The release of this title marks the first action fighting title that features head-to-head dinosaurs from the blockbuster films "Jurassic Park" and "The Lost World," as well as newly discovered dinosaurs.

"Warpath Jurassic Park takes a fresh approach to the traditional fighting game genre," says Emily Kenner, product manager at Electronic Arts. "The game offers an array of unique dinosaur against dinosaur action scenes, which provides a challenging and fun game experience."

Players can choose from a total of 14 different dinosaurs and fight in 14 visually stunning 3-D arenas, most of which are modeled after actual movie locales. The recognizable fighting arenas include the Visitor's Center, Helicopter Pad and 76 Station. Gamers will find a variety of diverse and well-known predators from the Jurassic Park world including the popular Tyrannosaurus Rex, Styrcosaurus and Triceratops. Helping to bring another layer of excitement and interest in the game is the addition of an array of newly discovered dinosaurs such as the Mega Raptor and Giganotosaurus.

Each of the dinosaurs will feature more than thirty moves, some of which are signature moves. Players will be able to snap, claw, rake, bite, grab, execute combination moves, reversals and slams. Dinosaurs will be able to eat Artificial Intelligence (AI) characters and animals for increased health and power.

Warpath Jurassic Park offers many compelling features and gameplay modes including arcade, choice, practice, survival, team, frenzy and versus. Battles will be supercharged with real-time wounding effects, shadows and lighting, rising dust, blood and environmental effects such as lightening. To make fights even more exciting, players can inflict damage on an opponent and win a match by strategically taking advantage of the destructible objects in the environment. For instance, gamers can throw their opponent on an electric fence or lead an opponent into an exploding oil drum. In addition, bone crunching sounds, primal tribal music and an original orchestral score help to escalate the adrenaline rush of the game.

Warpath Jurassic Park utilizes the latest technology for the PlayStation system, specifically Hierarchical Modeling Data (HMD). HMD technology allows for more life-like dinosaur movements. Additionally, HMD technology allows for realistic single skin textures, which helps to enhance real-time lighting and shadowing on the dinosaurs as they move throughout the environment. For example, players will see fluid movements and the reflective color of lights on the skin of the dinosaur.

Warpath Jurassic Park for the PlayStation, co-published by Electronic Arts and DreamWorks Interactive and developed by Black Ops, supports up to two-players via single-screen and is dual shock compatible. The game carries a ''T'' (Teen) ESRB rating and has an MSRP of US \$39.95. More information on the game is available at <http://www.warpathgame.com>.

#### THQ/JAKKS Pacific Ships WWF WrestleMania 2000 For Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color

THQ/JAKKS Pacific, LLC announced the release of WWF WrestleMania 2000 for the Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color Systems.

The games are the first two to be released under the 10 year THQ/JAKKS video game license with the World Wrestling Federation, and will be available at major retail outlets nationwide for the suggested retail price of \$59.99 (Nintendo 64) and \$29.99 (Game Boy Color).

''THQ is excited to be part of the team bringing the highly anticipated WWF WrestleMania 2000 to WWF and Nintendo enthusiasts," said Brian Farrell, president and CEO of THQ. ''With the WWF as the number one license in Sports-Entertainment and THQ's proven development expertise, THQ is poised to maintain its lead in this highly competitive genre with its WWF debut on

the Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color."

"JAKKS Pacific is delighted to be part of the team introducing these outstanding WWF videogames," said Stephen Berman, president and COO of JAKKS Pacific Inc. "The World Wrestling Federation is one of the hottest names in the game and toy industries. Our success with WWF toys, action figures and accessories, coupled with THQ's proven development skills and the great WWF media content, lead us to believe that WWF WrestleMania 2000 for Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color are certain to be hits."

"WWFE is proud of the partnership that has been created between WWFE, JAKKS Pacific and THQ. This partnership maximizes the strength of each individual company and sets a new standard in licensing, product development and marketing that currently is unequaled in the marketplace," commented Jim Bell, Sr., vice president licensing and merchandising of WWFE.

Developed by top-selling, critically acclaimed wrestling game developer AKI Corp., WWF WrestleMania 2000 for Nintendo 64 offers enthusiasts a comprehensive list of features and WWF Superstars including The Rock, The Undertaker and Stone Cold Steve Austin. Intricate create-a-wrestler and edit modes will give players the chance to design new characters with specific appearances and mannerisms. Several game modes, including cage and weapons matches, are also featured in WWF WrestleMania 2000, including the biggest pay-per-view events in the world and all-new wrestler entrances complete with authentic Titantron clips and pyrotechnics.

With more than 15 of the World Wrestling Federation's top Superstars, game developer Natsume brings WWF WrestleMania 2000 to the Game Boy Color offering enthusiasts on the go the thrill of competing as and against the biggest names in the WWF. Game Boy Color owners will be able to play against friends for the first time with the Game Boy Color's link cable support. With over 100 moves, including signature maneuvers, trademark finishers, and pre-match entrances and taunts, WWF WrestleMania 2000 for the Game Boy Color packs all the great features of a home console game for fans of the hand-held system. WWF WrestleMania 2000 for Game Boy Color is also compatible with Super Game Boy and Game Boy.

#### The Force is Strong in LucasArts' Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battles, Fast and Furious Arcade-Style Action for PlayStation

Intense Lightsaber Combat, Legions of Powerful New Enemies, Jedi Knights Featured in Single and Cooperative Battle

LucasArts Entertainment Company LLC puts the supreme power of the legendary Jedi into players' hands in the action-arcade title Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battles. Expected to release for PlayStation in spring 2000, Jedi Power Battles presents an escalating series of one and two player clashes between lightsaber and Force-wielding Jedi Knights and a fearsome onslaught of menacing opponents from the Sith and Trade Federation.

Accessible to players of all skill levels, the high energy Jedi Power Battles draws inspiration from the best-loved classic action-arcade games of the past. Players choose from among five Jedi characters, and are immersed into a relentless barrage of clashes with the Sith and Trade Federation's most powerful droids, mercenaries and assassins, and ultimately, the dreaded Darth Maul. As they progress through the game's ten

action-packed levels, players are challenged to learn a variety of fighting moves to help them face off against each level's boss. As players hone their skills, the game's points-based reward system and power-ups will allow them to unlock new moves, strengthen Force powers and enhance health.

"Jedi Power Battles is a fast action, arcade-style game inspired by classic LucasArts titles such as Super Star Wars," says Joel Dreskin, product marketing manager for LucasArts. "The game immediately thrusts players into the fray where the lightning-quick reflexes and deft lightsaber prowess of a skilled Jedi Knight are the keys to survival and ultimate victory over enemy forces."

Jedi Power Battles allows players to enter into combat as either Qui-Gon Jinn, Obi-Wan Kenobi, or Jedi Council members Mace Windu, Plo Koon or Adi Gallia. Each Jedi is a formidable warrior with a unique set of battle skills that players must carefully consider before heading into the heat of battle. For instance, Mace Windu is the game's most balanced character. He fights with medium speed and health, and is able to increase the power of his lightsaber by means of the Force. Obi-Wan possesses quickness, agility and strong health, but has somewhat limited Force powers because of his inexperience and youth. Qui-Gon's years of training as a Jedi Knight have provided him with very strong Force powers, and he excels at healing and defense but has lower health. Plo Koon is gifted with an abundance of strength, though he is the slowest of all five characters. Adi Gallia is the fastest Jedi Knight in the game, and she has the ability to strike more quickly but her combat skills are not as strong.

The health and points reward system in Jedi Power Battles is based upon several factors. As players move through each level points are awarded for successful strikes against opponents and overall completion of objectives. When players surpass certain point milestones they are rewarded with new attack abilities, Force powers, enhanced health, and other bonuses.

Power-ups are a key component of Jedi Power Battles and have a direct effect on the strength and abilities of each Jedi Knight character. As with the game's points reward system, power-ups renew health, recharge Force powers, and provide a limited super boost to lightsabers. In addition, power-ups allow players to obtain a variety of items for use in combat such as thermite bombs, shields, and restraining bolts.

Each level in Jedi Power Battles presents a specific Star Wars: Episode I-based environment, which will pose as much of a challenge for players as their opponents. As in the action arcade games it is inspired by, levels are based around platforms and obstacles which players must negotiate in their various encounters. Settings range from a foreboding Trade Federation droid control ship, the harsh desert scapes of Tatooine, the dangerous streets of Theed, and the mysterious swamps of Naboo.

Gameplay in Jedi Power Battles is well balanced between single and cooperative modes. The game offers more challenging and aggressive opponents with each new single player level. Cooperative play unleashes more opponents and increasingly complex battle scenarios. To be successful, players must work as a team and use each character's unique abilities to overcome the power of the Sith and Trade Federation.

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. announced that its Rockstar Games division shipped Thrasher: Skate and Destroy for the PlayStation. Backed by the industry's leading skateboarding publication Thrasher Magazine, Thrasher: Skate and Destroy is the definitive urban skateboarding game for the PlayStation. The game features a classic hip-hop soundtrack including Public Enemy, Run DMC, EPMD, Gang Star and Sugar Hill Gang, as well as all of the industry's top clothing and equipment companies and brands.

"Thrasher: Skate and Destroy will provide the most authentic skateboarding experience on PlayStation," stated Sam Houser, president of Rockstar Games. "From the fashion, sponsors, music, and gameplay no other game captures the essence, style, and vibe of true skate culture the way that Thrasher: Skate and Destroy does."

Thrasher: Skate and Destroy was selected as Playboy's number two pick in their Holiday Video Game Picks of the Year for Sony PlayStation.

In the latest issue of Stuff Magazine, Thrasher: Skate and Destroy received "Game of the Month" honors, as well as a perfect score - "5 out of 5 stars".

Amazon.com states, "This game captures the true spirit, style, and skill of the renegade freestyle street-skating culture."

Thrasher: Skate and Destroy combines tense timed skating and undirected free play. While players can combine moves to create new tricks, it is up to the skater's creativity and instincts to use the natural urban terrain to the utmost while skating. Developed by Z-Axis in conjunction with and supported by the skate communities on the East and West coast, Thrasher: Skate and Destroy is what skateboarding is all about. For more information, please visit the official website for Thrasher: Skate and Destroy at <http://www.skateanddestroy.com>.

#### Sega Rally 2 Revs-up for Sega Dreamcast

#### Arcade Classic Gets Boost With 11 New Cars and 12 New Tracks

Start your Sega Dreamcast and take it into overdrive! "Sega Rally 2," a new off-road arcade racing game, is now available for the 128-bit, Internet ready Sega Dreamcast videogame system.

This high-speed, in-the-dirt thrill ride gives gamers all the intense action, realistic 3D graphics and loads of customizable cars and tracks they know from the arcade legend, with some added surprises. "Sega Rally 2" features exclusive new cars and tracks only for Sega Dreamcast. The game is available at retailers nationwide for \$49.95.

In "Sega Rally 2," gamers can choose from 19 different car types, 11 of which are exclusive to the Sega Dreamcast version including the Fiat 131 Abarth and Peugeot 206. Each car has different driving and control options ranging from automatic or manual transmission, to five gear ratio levels starting at acceleration and going up to high speed performance. From there, players can fine-tune car settings by adjusting the levels of handling from quick to loose and the front and rear suspension from hard to soft. Brake settings can be altered as well.

The Sega Dreamcast version also features 16 courses including desert, mountain and muddy tracks, 12 that were not found in the arcade version. The desert course challenges gamers to race off-road through dirt and large mounds of sand without rolling their cars. On all courses, gamers must do their best to make it through sudden jumps, hair-pin turns and puddles.

"Sega Rally 2" features random weather effects, which change with the seasons and affect gamers' driving abilities. For example, the rain produces puddles on the tracks that continue to get bigger as the storm persists. These conditions affect drivers' speed and maneuverability and can make them fishtail around the track. The 3D graphics and attention to detail in "Sega Rally 2" are incredible -- players can see sparks when cars hit the rails and particles of dust fly as they race through dirt.

Gamers not afraid to tough out the rigors of the seasons for 10 years can try out the 10-Year Championship Mode. In this mode, players must race from year-to-year and complete the final course in order to progress. Upon achieving the first position in any year, players will have access to another car.

"Sega saw the opportunity to take their renowned arcade racer to another level on Sega Dreamcast," said Greg Thomas, vice president of product development, Sega of America. "By adding realistic simulation properties such as changing weather, road conditions and car handling, gamers will get an added boost of true-to-life racing along with the hard-core arcade racing experience Sega is known for."

Players can jump, power slide and dash through the game with four intense racing modes to choose from, including 10-Year Championship, Arcade and 2-Player Battle in which two players can compete via split screen. Time Attack mode allows players to race without competition and compete against themselves in a re-creation of players' last race. The Visual Memory Unit (VMU) allows players to view their records from each mode via the LCD screen on their controller.

As announced on Nov. 11, 1999, this version of "Sega Rally 2" will ship without a network component. "Sega Rally 2" is available at retailers nationwide and at [www.sega.com](http://www.sega.com).

#### THQ Ships Nuclear Strike 64 For Nintendo 64 Console

THQ Inc. announced the release of Nuclear Strike 64, developed by Pacific Coast Power and Light Co., a wholly owned subsidiary of THQ.

For the first time, enthusiasts of the popular Strike series can experience all the action and realism of the popular Strike series on Nintendo 64. Licensed by Electronic Arts, Nuclear Strike 64 is available at major retail outlets nationwide for a suggested retail price of \$49.99.

"Nuclear Strike 64 is a faithful interpretation of the 'Strike' series," said Don Traeger, president of Pacific Coast Power and Light Co.

"Longtime fans of the series will enjoy the all new reticle-targeting system, allowing players to pursue and destroy enemies with greater accuracy. Players will also be able to take the helm of numerous land, sea and air assault vehicles as well as experience the challenge of combat in insanely populated battlefields."

Players are challenged with defeating a nuclear terrorist plotting the start of World War III. From the tropical islands of the South Seas to the deep, dark jungle valleys of Asia, players take control of any one of more than 10 vehicles including helicopters, jets, tanks and hovercraft over remarkable, photo-realistic terrains. Features include an improved waypoint compass and mini-radar system, real-time lighting effects, larger explosions and artificial intelligence that reacts to the player's behavior.

With incredibly fast-paced action, authentic assault vehicles and realistic backdrops, the Strike series has become an enormously popular and best-selling shooter. For the first time ever the series will be available on the Nintendo 64 and includes Rumble and Memory Expansion Pak support.

Pacific Coast Power and Light Co. and THQ also recently released Road Rash 64 for Nintendo 64. For more information on Nuclear Strike 64, Road Rash 64 and the rest of THQ's holiday season line-up, visit [www.thq.com](http://www.thq.com).

#### Acclaim Sports' NBA JAM 2000 for Nintendo 64 Ships

Acclaim Sports, a division of Acclaim Entertainment, Inc., announced that NBA JAM 2000 for Nintendo 64 shipped to retailers Tuesday. Developed by Acclaim Studios Salt Lake City, NBA JAM 2000 is supported by a national television campaign featuring 1999 NBA Rebounding Champion Chris Webber of the Sacramento Kings and the song "Peter Piper" from ground-breaking rap trio RUN-D.M.C. In addition, legendary NBA announcer Marv Albert provides in-game studio commentary.

"Chris Webber is one of the most recognizable stars in the NBA," said Michael Jerchower, Acclaim Sports' Senior Marketing Manager. "By combining his presence with a powerful retro-rap song from RUN-D.M.C., Acclaim Sports has created a unique identity for NBA JAM 2000."

NBA JAM 2000 returns to its roots with an explosive 2-on-2 JAM mode featuring 50 dunks, awesome special effects, and exclusive beach, school yard, and night courts. In addition, gamers can simulate authentic NBA play with an exciting 5-on-5 simulation mode which highlights realistic team play styles and individual signature moves. Albert, who served as the play-by-play voice for NBA JAM Extreme for the PlayStation and arcade versions, provides pre-game, halftime, and post-game commentary for the current NBA JAM title.

#### playstation.com Unveils Sleek New Redesign to Create Complete Online Destination for PlayStation

Sony Computer Entertainment America announced the debut of the redesigned PlayStation Web site, [playstation.com](http://playstation.com), the highest trafficked game site on the Web. Rated the most popular videogame site by hot100.com, the new [playstation.com](http://playstation.com) went live featuring faster navigation tools, community message boards, full screen graphics, detailed content and much more. The site can be accessed at <http://www.playstation.com>.

Currently [playstation.com](http://playstation.com) receives more than one million visitors per

month, with the average user spending between 11-13 minutes each session. With easier navigation, quicker download time and new community development applications, the user base is expected to increase upwards of at least 70 percent.

“The playstation.com redesign is an integral part of the PlayStation Underground consumer loyalty program developed to provide PlayStation fans with the cutting-edge interactive experiences they have come to expect from the worldwide leader in videogame entertainment,” said Andrew House, vice president, marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. “With the new and improved site, our intent is to develop playstation.com into the primary online destination for gamers seeking the very best community environment for gathering and sharing information and ideas relating to the world of PlayStation.”

Key elements of the redesign include:

- \* Central game focus -- The navigation of the site features games as the central focal zone. The pages allow gamers to access anything about a particular game from one central page, whether it be a mini-site, mailable picturegrams, codes, game-specific clothing or message boards where gamers can chat with each other.
- \* Community message boards -- Gamers can now join a fully formed and populated online PlayStation community through message boards. Message boards will be hosted by professional moderators who will not only monitor the posted content for accuracy, but will also ensure that the environment remains a viable place for gamers of all ages to participate. (“Filth filters” are in place to minimize foul language.)
- \* HotNews -- This free email service will allow gamers to directly receive the latest information on games, PlayStation events, PlayStation developments, and more, two to four times a month.
- \* Permission marketing -- Gamers “opt-in” to the PlayStation consumer loyalty program, so that personal gaming interests and behavioral information can be gathered with their permission. Ultimately, this will allow Sony Computer Entertainment America to target direct marketing efforts more effectively and efficiently.
- \* Full-screen graphics and faster downloads -- Featuring deep, rich and edgy full-screen graphics, users can download images dynamically faster than ever before utilizing new compression technology and database and coding protocols. Site code sophistication reads the individual viewer’s browser capability and delivers seamlessly the richest experience the user can handle, whether it be static graphics or flash animations.
- \* Easy navigation -- Users can control their navigation from anywhere on the site.
- \* PlayStation news and information updated daily -- playstation.com will feature PlayStation game information, daily news and events, message boards, consumer service online help and more.
- \* More dedicated gaming mini-sites -- playstation.com will offer more than 80 mini-sites dedicated to some of the greatest PlayStation games, in addition to more than 100 third party mini-sites and information on nearly 200 more games.

Other revisions to the site include:

- \* Game recommendations tool -- This program helps users select the appropriate games to buy, categorized by age, gender, game genre, personality type and/or proficiency level.
- \* More efficient gift registry -- This gift registry program allows

users to specify the occasion, create a wish list and send this wish list to gift givers by email. Gift givers are then encouraged (through embedded hot links) to visit the registry and view the selected items. Once the gift giver purchases an item, it will be indicated on the wish list.

- \* New look for PlayStation Threadz & Accessories online store -- This page features fully stocked items consisting of PlayStation-branded and title-specific clothing and accessories for the newest games, such as CTR (Crash Team Racing), Gran Turismo 2, Um Jammer Lammy, Spyro (2): Ripto's Rage!, and more.
- \* Direct access to SCEA's online consumer services group -- Users can have all of their technical questions answered by consumer services online. The dedicated staff and new automated fuzzy logic built into the site allows users to get quick answers to their inquiries.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!  
\*\*\*\*\*

An interesting e-mail I recently received. A good site pertaining to classic gaming systems, including a variety of Atari-related items:

From: Michael Thomasson <mthomasson@hammondky.com>  
To: dpj@delphi.com  
Subject: Atari

Hello,

Read that you were an Atari buff, so thought that I'd send you this link. Lots of Classic Game related information, but most interesting to you would be the Atari Crossword Puzzle. Come visit us:

<http://www.mindspring.com/~mikecase/>

Thanks,  
Michael

=~ =~ =~

A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

AMD Ships Fastest PC Chip Ahead of Holiday Season

In an expected move to grab consumer PC sales during the holiday-selling

season, Advanced Micro Devices Inc. on Monday introduced a new 750 megahertz processor, the fastest chip to run on Intel-based personal computers.

The 750 MHz Althon chip gives AMD a temporary advantage over Intel Corp., the dominant maker of PC microprocessors. Intel's current fastest chip runs at 700 MHz, though higher speed chips are due out in coming months.

AMD said its Althon processor will be used by Compaq Computer Corp., International Business Machines Corp. and other PC makers, largely in high-end consumer models.

It is designed to boost performance on PCs running data-intensive three-dimensional graphics, audio, video, product design and rendering programs, Web content development and standard office applications.

AMD said it plans to sell the Althon chip for \$799 in quantities of 1,000 to PC makers.

#### The 1GHz Race Is On

Just as the 1960s space race paid unexpected dividends in the coin of new household conveniences, experts say the spillover from the AMD-Intel competition to debut a one gigahertz chip is going to drive down computing costs in the new year and beyond.

Both AMD and Intel have already gone on record saying they expect to reach the gigahertz mark by the end of next year, a claim observers of the chip scene fully expect will be realized.

"Over the last two years, consumers looking for value-oriented systems saw performance skyrocket and prices plummet, in part due to the battle between the K6-2 and Celeron," said Mike Feibus, a principal at Mercury Research Inc. "Now, we've got a dogfight at the high-end, which means buyers of premium PCs are in for a similar boon in 2000."

The two chipmakers are within hailing distance of the magic mark although the crown for the winner of the speed competition is up for grabs.

On Monday, AMD leapfrogged Intel's 733MHz Pentium III chip with its new 750MHz Athlon PC processor.

This marked the first time AMD produced a chip built on its 0.18-micron manufacturing process. The process, which is similar to a 0.18-micron process used by Intel, will allow the company to boost Athlon to 1,000MHz.

The demand for more processing power among hard-core users in the computer game community is insatiable. In contrast, it's unclear whether average PC users will react to the arrival of 1GHz performance with the same enthusiasm or a collective shrug.

Observers of the chip scene point out that the one gigahertz mark is just that, a mark. Instead, it's getting to that goal that is expected to produce the biggest benefits for consumers.

As AMD and Intel one-up each other in performance, PC buyers should expect a steady stream of new high-end chips hand-in-hand with steady

price cuts, according to analysts. They also expect prices for mid-range chips to similarly drop down the pricing ladder.

Here's the ace kicker: By the same time next year, today's 750MHz or 800MHz chip will become the low-cost, entry-level processor in the market.

"The upside here -- especially for the customer who's sensitive to overall performance -- is that both companies are beating each other about the head and shoulders to accelerate the rate at which new (chips) are brought to the market," said Nathan Brookwood, a principal with Insight64, of Saratoga, Calif. "As long as (AMD) can come out with a product that is \$700 or \$800, it bodes well for the company. It bodes well for the customer."

Indeed, AMD says an enhanced version of Athlon, based on a new processor core, will reach the 1GHz level by the second part of next year. Analysts say AMD may be sandbagging. The company presently has an 800MHz chip scheduled for release in the first quarter while a 900MHz Athlon is also in the works.

"AMD could clearly jump out now with an 800MHz part. However, what does it get them to be that much ahead of Intel?" Brookwood said.

For its part, AMD is playing it coy. A spokesman said it wasn't so much as a matter of introducing a 1GHz part. "It's whether there's sufficient demand that warrants a product launch," said the spokesman.

Intel has made public its intention to ship an all-new desktop chip, running at 1GHz or faster next year. This chip, code-named Willamette, is also due in the second half of the year and will probably ship late in the third quarter.

That leaves the Pentium III. Will it reach 1GHz?

Intel's current Pentium III, sometimes referred to as Coppermine, has "headroom to about 900MHz," Brookwood said. However, "It's conceivable that Coppermine would get to 1GHz."

Intel will attempt to push Pentium III on 0.18-micron to 1,000MHz, said Pat Gelsinger, an Intel vice president and general manager of its Desktop Products Group said in an interview earlier this month.

That should make it interesting for PC buyers, who should look for the companies to trade jabs well into the new year.

While AMD has an 800MHz Athlon chip waiting in the wings, Intel has an 800MHz Pentium III in the works as well. The company will ship its 800MHz later in the first quarter. A 750MHz Pentium III may come early in the new year.

AMD will likely ship the 800MHz Athlon, followed by an 850MHz and 900MHz version as the year progresses. Intel will likely ship Pentium IIIs in 750MHz and 800MHz followed by speeds of 866MHz and 933MHz, Gelsinger told ZDNet.

Motorola Inc. said on Wednesday it built what it called the world's thinnest transistor, which could some day put the processing power of a desktop computer into a device as small as a wireless phone.

The telecommunications and technology company said it used a class of material called perovskites (pronounced Per-AHV-skites) which will allow future transistors to be smaller and faster while consuming less power.

The material would replace silicon dioxide, which has been used for 30 years to form a thin insulating film on silicon, a necessary step in making integrated circuits. The new technology allows for transistors that are effectively three to four times thinner than those built with conventional semiconductor materials.

"Eventually, you will see computers, cell phones, everything get faster and more powerful and use less power," Jerry Hallmark, a research manager at Motorola Labs in Tempe, Ariz., said in a telephone interview.

"It will let you have the processing power of a desktop computer in your cell phone."

With the new transistor, consumers may soon be able to hold cell phone video conferences, among other things, Hallmark said. He expected devices using the transistors to be commercially available in four to five years.

He said Motorola and other companies had been looking for a replacement for silicon dioxide because researchers were unable to shrink that material much further than they already have. As consumers seek smaller and smaller devices, all parts of the semiconductor will have to get even tinier.

"As devices continue to shrink in size, the gate oxide (insulation) of the transistor also needs to become thinner," Jim Prendergast, general manager of Motorola's physical sciences research lab, said in a statement.

"However, we are quickly reaching the limit where we can no longer thin the silicon dioxide which has been used as a gate insulator for the last 30 years. The solution is to use a new family of materials that appear electrically to be much smaller than their actual physical thickness."

#### Cursor Software Monitors Customers

A company's popular software to change a Web browser's computer cursor into cartoon characters and other images is quietly tracking its customers across the Internet and recording which Web pages they visit.

Comet Systems Inc., a private company in New York, does not dispute that its free cursor software, installed by more than 16 million people, reports back to its own computers with each customer's unique serial number each time that person visits any of 60,000 Web sites - including dozens aimed at young children - that support its technology.

Computer privacy experts expressed dismay over the behind-the-scenes transmissions, which are sent without warning. But the company insists it is not violating customers' privacy because it does not attempt to match serial numbers against anyone's real-world identity. It published an

explanation of its practices early Monday on its Internet site after questions over the weekend from The Associated Press.

"We don't know your gender, your age or anything except you're a Web browser visiting sites," Comet spokesman Ben Austin said. "There's not a lot of reason to crunch that data because I don't see that it's in anyone's economic interests. We're stating for the record that we don't do that and we never will."

Austin said the company tracks those serial numbers for a census of its customers, who aren't asked to disclose their names or e-mail addresses, and because some Web sites pay Comet based on the number of visitors using the cursor-changing technology.

Critics said the company should have more openly disclosed the transmissions to its customers. They also contend it would not be enormously difficult with today's technology to begin correlating the Comet serial number with a consumer's identity if the company suddenly decided to or if Comet - with its extensive tracking database - were purchased by new owners willing to do that.

"There's zero expectation that tracking is going on with this product," said Richard M. Smith of Brookline, Mass., a computer security expert who noticed the transmissions last week. "Who would have thought a little cursor could track your Web movements? It's going back to (Comet's) home base and saying this person with this serial number is now at this Web site."

Consumers are prompted to install Comet's cursor software, which takes only a few seconds, when they visit any of the 60,000 Web sites that support its technology, including those for the Dilbert and Peanuts characters of United Feature Syndicate Inc., the Ty Inc. Web site for Beanie Babies, the Garfield comic strip page and sites for children's movies like "The Iron Giant" from Warner Bros.

"What I find most disturbing is that most of these Web sites are for kids," Smith said. "You're asking a kid if it's OK to install this software. (Comet Systems) is in such a position to go back and find what sites did this user ID visit. There are so many ways to tie that to an offline identity."

Austin, the company spokesman, insists Comet has no such plans.

"When companies have gotten in trouble in the past, it's typically because they relate user IDs to some list of real names of actual people," Austin said. "We intentionally keep our users anonymous by not collecting names or e-mail addresses, and it's something we've stated we will not do."

The company's technology officer, Tom Schmitter, acknowledged Monday that part of the identifier harvested by Comet includes the serial number for each computer's network connection hardware. That means a customer's Web browsing history could be linked back to a specific machine by examining the company's tracking logs and his personal computer.

Schmitter said Comet was unaware until Monday it had been collecting those numbers and promised to delete those records, but the company will continue to randomly assign serial numbers to its customers because it needs to count them accurately to make money.

Privacy experts said it was unclear whether Comet was violating any law, although Jason Catlett of Junkbusters Corp., a New Jersey-based privacy advocate, wrote Monday to New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer asking him to investigate. Catlett called Comet's actions a "wholesale violation of its users' privacy."

#### New E-mail Virus Causing Damage

Banc of America and Disney's Go.com are among dozens of companies hit by a new version of a computer virus that spreads by e-mail and destroys computer files.

Anti-virus software makers who reported the outbreak of the "MiniZip" virus warned computer users on Wednesday against opening any file attached to suspicious e-mail.

Government-affiliated experts declined to issue any alert, saying they hadn't received any direct reports of the virus.

In fact, fears of the outbreak may have been spreading faster on Wednesday than the virus: Network Associates, a leading maker of anti-virus software, reported that visits to its Web site increased more than tenfold compared with Tuesday.

MiniZip is a compressed version of Worm.ExploreZip, the virus that struck hundreds of thousands of computers at major companies in June.

The new version, first reported last week, was detected on Tuesday at Go.com, worming its way through computer hard drives at the headquarters of online network and search engine.

Within hours, all staff had been warned not to open any file attached to any e-mail that's packaged as a friendly response to an earlier message. Such attachments, they were told, may contain a virus that would destroy files stored on their machines.

"A handful of computers were affected before we caught it," said GO.com spokeswoman Shelly Greenhalgh. "It could have been much worse."

The MiniZip also was discovered on Tuesday at Banc of America, but did no permanent damage because files are copies on back-up systems.

"It made for a hectic day for our information technology department," said Jennifer Smith, spokeswoman for San Francisco-based Banc of America Securities. "Everyone had to log off so they could clear our system."

As with Worm.ExploreZip, the MiniZip is only known to attack computers using Microsoft operating systems Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT. Rival operating systems such as Macintosh and Unix apparently are not vulnerable.

On an infected computer, the MiniZip reads the addresses of new and unread e-mail and automatically sends itself as a response, changing the subject line from, for example, "Work Meeting" to "Re: Work Meeting."

The body of the message reads: "Hi (recipient's name)! I received your e-mail and I shall send you an e-mail ASAP. Till then, take a look at the

attached zipped docs. bye."

Don't click on that attachment, experts said. Opening it leads to the destruction of various files on a computer, which are then replaced with empty files.

"I have to say that this is a particularly insidious virus," said Carey Nachenberg, chief researcher at Symantec Corp.'s anti-virus research center in Cupertino, Calif. "This is both a very fast spreading computer virus, and also very damaging."

Computer users can protect uninfected machines by downloading free fixes on the Internet from various anti-virus software companies.

Sal Viveros, a marketing manager for Network Associates, a Santa Clara-based company that also writes anti-virus software, said prevention is key - recovery rare.

"We've talked to people who lost spreadsheets with budgets on them, letters, documents, presentations," he said. "If the company doesn't back up their files, unfortunately there's not much we can do."

Viveros said that by Wednesday afternoon new reports of the virus were slowing, but that it could take weeks before it is completely eradicated.

#### Dell to Offer New Webpc Line of Consumer PCs

Dell Computer Corp., the world's No. 2 personal computer maker, said it will unveil on Tuesday a new generation of small and stylish Intel-based consumer desktop PCs that do away with the austere functionalism of traditional PCs.

Dell's long-anticipated Webpc, as the new computers are known, take up roughly one third the desktop space of a typical pizza-box shaped PC and come in at least five designer colors, echoing a strategy pioneered by Apple Computer Inc.

Prices start at \$1,000 for a complete package that includes a computer running an Intel Celeron 433 megahertz chip, a standard 15-inch monitor with built-in speakers, a printer and one year of the company's Dellnet Internet access service.

The Webpc introduction, timed to coincide with the holiday PC shopping rush, positions Dell to meet rising demand for an emerging category of color-coordinated, industrially designed PCs that fit the decor of rooms other than the home office.

"The Webpc is for consumers looking for a really hassle-free solution that allows a user to surf the Web, play games and use office applications when working at home," John Medica, vice president and general manager of Dell's Web Products Group, said in a phone interview on Monday.

By offering a complete package, Dell has broken with its typical practice of offering a la carte pricing that allow consumers to mix-and-match computer chips and other components, hard disk drive and peripherals to create a customized PC.

Taking advantage of its direct-selling capacity via the Web at <http://www.webpc.com> or over the telephone, Dell is set to take orders on Tuesday and ship the products in the first half of next month. Orders take five to eight days to fill and those made by mid-December could be ready for Christmas, Medica said.

The Webpc comes in two additional configurations, including a 466 megahertz-based Webpc priced at \$1,099 that includes an optional flat-panel display for another \$850 or \$1,949 in total. A 500 megahertz Intel Pentium III-based model starts at \$1,499, or \$2,349 with flat-panel display.

The Webpc weighs 10 pounds, is six inches wide, 11 inches high and 10 inches deep. The box comes in shades of blue, orange, teal, red and purple. Printers and external floppy disk drives come in complementary colors of blue or gray.

In addition, Dell is offering up to six different peripheral products for the Webpc, including such devices as a digital scanner, a videogame joy stick or a digital camera.

The Webpc is the latest in a new class of PCs that take advantage of smaller motherboards, or internal chassis, from top PC chip maker Intel Corp. and new simpler connector technology known as Universal Serial Bus (USB).

Earlier this month, Compaq introduced a similarly small, \$499 PC that is aimed at office workers, not consumers. In October, Gateway introduced a new all-in-one PC that looks like Apple's iMac consumer computer. The Gateway Astro is priced at \$799 for the PC, or just under \$1,000 with a printer and Internet access service -- in line with Dell's Webpc offer.

Van Baker, a consumer PC analyst with industry research firm Dataquest of San Jose, Calif., said Dell's Webpc could be a hit with consumers who are intimidated by all the decisions involved in traditional PCs. "It's a nicely done product. I think it will have appeal," Baker said.

However, he speculated that Dell's decision to bundle the various elements of the Webpc in a single package may be an artful way around the company's recent shortage of certain components, including memory chips and flat-panel displays.

Dell plans to continue to sell its existing Dimension line of standard consumer PCs, its Inspiron line of notebooks and other products using its traditional a la carte pricing.

Baker said Dell is the first to market such smaller PCs to consumer. It can do so in the final run-up to the holidays because its direct sales approach via the Web allows consumers to quickly order such new models. He contrasted Dell's speed to Compaq, the world's No. 1 PC maker, which must pre-build and sell consumer PCs largely through retail outlets.

#### Mediator Holds Microsoft Meeting

Judge Richard Posner met with representatives of Microsoft Corp., 19 states and the Justice Department for nearly two hours Tuesday to explore the

chances of a settlement in the company's landmark antitrust trial.

None of the parties to the meeting made a formal statement, but one attorney said they were under orders not to discuss the talks publicly.

Posner, accompanied by government and company lawyers, entered the exclusive Standard Club across the street from the Federal Courthouse here, where he sits as chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit.

"Get out of the way please," Posner said as he brushed past reporters shouting questions.

Almost two hours later, David Boies, who is working for the federal government, left through the canopied front entrance of the white stone building, along with Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal and Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller.

Asked for comment, Boies quipped: "I won't even comment on the fruit plate." But he acknowledged that future meetings would "probably be in Chicago."

"We're not going to be able to talk at all, even about details like when we're going to meet again, where it's going to be," said Boies, a private attorney who is helping the Justice Department litigate the Microsoft case. "We're just going to be as confidential as we can."

U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson -- who is trying the case in Washington -- asked Posner to act in a private capacity as a mediator after earlier attempts at settlement failed.

But all sides acknowledge the talks will be difficult. In case they do not succeed Jackson has set out a time schedule for the next phase of the trial, with written arguments due starting Dec. 6 and oral arguments set for Feb. 22.

In the absence of a settlement, Jackson will next determine whether Microsoft violated the nation's antitrust laws. He has already handed down his findings of fact, a 207-page document that found Microsoft used monopoly power in the operating system for personal computers to harm consumers, rivals and other companies.

The findings of fact serve as a starting point for Posner, who is an expert on economics.

The findings of fact point to the near-certainty that Jackson would find that Microsoft violated the law, antitrust lawyers have said repeatedly. That means any settlement would require some remedy that satisfies the government that Microsoft will no longer abuse its monopoly power.

Jackson's findings of fact have had another effect. Across the country, consumers have filed class action suits seeking damages from Microsoft for overcharges outlined in Jackson's findings of fact.

"A Microsoft study from November 1997 reveals that the company could have charged \$49 for an upgrade to Windows 98 -- there is no reason to believe that the \$49 price would have been unprofitable -- but the study identifies \$89 as the revenue-maximizing price," Jackson wrote.

Jackson said the choice to charge the higher price was "indicative of

monopoly power."

An expert who asked not to be identified by name said that settlements by the several states might have the effect of reining in consumer suits in some states.

#### U.S. Hires Financial Adviser on Microsoft Remedies

The U.S. Justice Department announced on Thursday it has retained Greenhill & Co. LLC of New York City, headed by Wall Street veteran Robert Greenhill, to advise it on the financial implications of a "full range" of potential remedies in the landmark Microsoft Corp. antitrust case.

The Justice department said that Greenhill & Co. would "assist the division in analyzing financial aspects of the full range of potential remedies in U.S. v. Microsoft, including conduct and structural relief."

Greenhill founded Greenhill and Co. in 1996. From 1993 to 1996, he served as chairman and chief executive of Smith Barney Inc. Before heading Smith Barney, he was president of Morgan Stanley Group Inc. from January 1991 to June 1993.

A Justice Department official made it clear that retention of the firm reflects no view by the department on whether the case would be resolved in court or through mediation.

"We expect that the firm's advice will be useful with all ongoing processes," the official said.

The Justice Department, representatives of 19 states and of Microsoft met earlier this week with a mediator in Chicago.

A judge has found that Microsoft used monopoly power to harm consumers, competitors and other firms, but reached no conclusion yet on whether those actions violate antitrust law.

Greenhill & Co. provides strategic advice, advises companies considering mergers and acquisitions and also is involved in real estate investment banking, according to its Web site at (<http://www.greenhill-co.com>).

A Microsoft spokesman had no views on the Justice Department action.

"The plaintiffs have the option to do whatever they deem necessary," said Jim Cullinan at the firm's headquarter in Redmond, Wash.

"We think it's far too premature to discuss remedies in this process -- there's a long way to go," he said. "We believe that at the end of the legal day our actions will be seen as pro-consumer and pro-competitive."

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